

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 06780 01 OF 02 290409Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 IO-14 ISO-00 TRSY-06 AID-05 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 FRB-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 ICA-20 XMB-04
OPIC-06 SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /107 W
-----105016 290438Z /73

R 281630Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5642
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 06780

USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB
SUBJECT: UNEMPLOYMENT AND VACANCIES - APRIL 1978

SUMMARY: THE NUMBERS REGISTERED AS UNEMPLOYED IN GREAT
BRITAIN AND THE UNITED KINGDOM FELL IN THE MONTH TO
APRIL 13, ACCORDING TO FIGURES PUBLISHED BY THE DEPART-
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PAGE 02 LONDON 06780 01 OF 02 290409Z

MENT OF EMPLOYMENT. TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE UNITED
KINGDOM WAS 1,451,758 (6.1 PERCENT OF ALL EMPLOYEES).
THIS REPRESENTS A MARGINAL REDUCTION OF 9,208 OVER THE
PREVIOUS MONTH AND IS SOMETHING OF A SURPRISE SINCE THE
APRIL FIGURES INCLUDE THE FIRST SCHOOL LEAVERS OF THE
ACADEMIC YEAR. INDEED, THE TOTAL WITHOUT WORK INCLUDES
60,771 SCHOOL LEAVERS, AN INCREASE OF 20,542 OVER THE

MONTH. AFTER SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT THE UK FIGURES SHOW 1,387,100 WITHOUT WORK. THIS REPRESENTS 5.8 PERCENT OF ALL EMPLOYEES AND IS A REDUCTION OF ALMOST 13,000 SINCE MARCH. VACANCIES ARE ALSO UP (AFTER SEASON ADJUSTMENT) TO 203,600. THE FIGURES SHOW THE SEVENTH CONSECUTIVE REDUCTION IN THE TOTAL WITHOUT WORK AND ARE THE LOWEST SINCE JUNE 1977 -- THOUGH THEY ARE ALSO THE HIGHEST APRIL FIGURES SINCE THE WAR. VACANCIES ARE ALSO INCREASING AND ARE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS. THE FULL FIGURES ARE GIVEN IN THE TABLE. END SUMMARY.

1. UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE UK CONTINUED THE TREND OF SMALL MONTHLY REDUCTIONS IN APRIL WHEN THE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED TOTAL WAS DOWN TO 1,387,100. THOUGH THE REDUCTION WAS INSUFFICIENT TO PUSH THE RATE DOWN BELOW ITS PREVIOUS LEVEL OF 5.8 PERCENT, IT IS THE LOWEST SEASONALLY ADJUSTED LEVEL SINCE LAST AUGUST.

2. THE FIGURES (GIVEN IN FULL IN THE ATTACHED TABLE) PROMPTED THE EMPLOYMENT SECRETARY, ALBERT BOOTH, TO COMMENT THAT THEY SHOWED "A HEARTENING TREND... ESPECIALLY SO IN VIEW OF THE DIRE PREDICTIONS WE READ SO FREQUENTLY". BOOTH'S APPARENT CONFIDENCE WILL NOT BE MATCHED BY THE AUTHORS OF THOSE DIRE PREDICTIONS UNTIL THE FIGURES FOR THE COMING FEW MONTHS ARE AVAILABLE TO UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 LONDON 06780 01 OF 02 290409Z

STRENGTHEN THE SUGGESTION THAT THE TREND HAS SHOWN DEFINITE SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT. MR. BOOTH'S CONCERN TO PORTRAY AN OPTIMISTIC INTERPRETATION IS ALL THE MORE UNDERSTANDABLE GIVEN THE INCREASING PRESSURE BY TUC LEADERS ON THE GOVERNMENT OVER UNEMPLOYMENT. SOME CRITICISM HAS BEEN LEVELED AT THE TUC LEADERSHIP FOR ITS INACTIVITY OVER THE ISSUE DURING RECENT YEARS. HOWEVER, CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES (THE ELECTION OF

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PAGE 01 LONDON 06780 02 OF 02 290408Z

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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 06780

DAVID BASNETT TO THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE GENERAL
COUNCIL) HAVE PROMPTED A SLIGHTLY MORE POSITIVE LINE
FROM THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. WHILE THE PRESSURE BEING
EXERTED BY THE TUC REMAINS VAGUE AND SEEMS PROMPTED
MORE BY HOPE THAN CONFIDENCE, THERE ARE SIGNS THAT THE
UNEMPLOYMENT ISSUE WILL BECOME A MORE CRUCIAL ONE IN
GOVERNMENT-TUC DISCUSSIONS OVER THE ECONOMIC FUTURE.
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PAGE 02 LONDON 06780 02 OF 02 290408Z

	GREAT BRITAIN	UNITED KINGDOM
UNEMPLOYED EXCLUDING	1,330,778	1,390,987
SCHOOL LEAVERS	(-30,563)	(-29,750)
SCHOOL LEAVERS	56,706	60,771
	(PLUS 19,067)	(PLUS 20,542)
TOTAL UNEMPLOYED	1,387,484	1,451,758
	(-11,496)	(-9,208)
RATE (PERCENT)	5.9	6.L

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UN-	1,326,400	1,387,100
EMPLOYED EXCLUDING	(-13,900)	(-12,900)
SCHOOL LEAVERS		
RATE (PERCENT)	5.7	5.8
GREAT BRITAIN UNITED KINGDOM		
NOTIFIED VACANCIES	227,607	229,766
(PLUS 19,333)	(PLUS 19,260)	
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED	201,900	203,600
VACANCIES	(PLUS 8,000)	(PLUS 7,800)

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